Committee installs Carbondale historical marker

A Carbondale historical marked was installed next to Carbondale City Hall and dedicated on Saturday morning, September 25, at 10 a.m. Among the guests at the dedication ceremonies were Senator Robert Mellow, Representative Frank Serafini, and Robert Smith, Director of Planning and Research of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The thirty-one persons who attended these ceremonies, sponsored by the Committee to Restore Carbondale City Hall, met in Council Chambers in City Hall at 10 a.m. S. Robert Powell welcomed the group and gave a history of the historical marker program in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Powell pointed out that since the historical marker program was instituted in 1945, over 1,400 historical markers have been installed in Pennsylvania. Four of those markers, Powell noted, were installed in Carbondale; three Carbondale historical markers and one Gravity Railroad marker.

The next speaker on the program was Robert Smith, who offered the restoration committee the use of the resources of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania in the committee's efforts to restore Carbondale City Hall. Following Smith's remarks, John V. Buberniak, a member of the restoration committee, presented a history of the Wurts brothers and of the establishment and development of the anthracite industry in Carbondale.

Representative Frank Serafini then addressed the group and praised the restoration committee for its work on behalf of the city of Carbondale. Powell again spoke to the group and pointed out five instances in the history of Carbondale when groups of Carbondale citizens, imbued with civic pride, took action on behalf of the city of Carbondale, not because they had to, rather, because they wanted to. Those five instances in the history of Carbondale, chosen from among many others, were in 1851 (when Carbondale was incorporated as a city), in 1852, 1859 and 1892 (when Carbondale's three City Halls were erected), and in 1981 (when the Committee to Restore Carbondale City Hall was formed).

Senator Robert Mellow next took the floor and spoke highly of the civic pride that is being made manifest in Carbondale by two groups of citizens: the Committee to Restore Carbondale City Hall and the Pioneer Days Committee. Senator Mellow remarked that the Fourth Annual Pioneer Days Parade (August 28, 1982) was the best parade that he had even participated in.

At the conclusion of Senator Mellow's remarks, Joseph Masco, acting managing director of Carbondale, spoke to the group in Council Chambers, and expressed his pleasure, and that of the city of Carbondale, with the restoration committee's work on behalf of the city.

Joseph Pascoe, a charter member of the restoration committee, next read letters from invited guests who were unable to attend the dedication ceremonies: Governor Dick Thornburgh, Charles Luger and Robert W. Pettinato (Lackawanna County Commissioners). Congressman Joseph M. McDade and Dr. Larry Tise (Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission) were, in addition, unable to attend these ceremonies, due to prior commitments. Mayor Fred J. Mancuso was unable to attend the dedication ceremonies due to an illness.

At 11 a.m. the group went from Council Chambers to the small plot of land between City Hall and Sixth Avenue, where the Carbondale historical marker that used to stand along Route 6 in Childs had been installed by the restoration committee. Following some appropriate remarks by S.Robert Powell, the Carbondale historical maker was unveiled by two outstanding citizens of Carbondale: Edith A. Gardner and John V. Buberniak. These dedication ceremonies were concluded by a prayer of benediction, which was offered by Rev. Dr. Claude A. Pullis of the Berean Baptist Church.

The restoration and installation of this historical marker, which was recently damaged by a motor vehicle, was carried out by Russell and Ann Powell, assisted by John Buberniak, Joseph Pascoe and Robert Powell. The paint and brushes for repainting the marker were donated to the restoration committee by the Carbondale Decorating Center.

Present at these installation and dedication ceremonies were: David J. Baum, John V. Buberniak, Dr. Thomas A. Coleman, Paul J. Collins, Jean M. Colville, Kenneth H. Colville Jr., Al Daugevelo, Mary Lou Dearie, Edith A. Gardner, John Langan, Nan E. Loftus, Joseph Martine, Joseph Masco, James K. McWilliams, Senator Robert Mellow, Charlotte Moro, Joseph Moro, Joseph Pascoe, Ann Swindlehurst Powell, S. Robert Powell, Rev. Dr. Claude A. Pullis, Esther Pullis, Represenntative Frank A. Serafini, Kay W. Shifler, Oliver R. Shifler, Robert Smith, James A. Sposito, Esq., Rev. Charles Starzer, Della Stone, Robert J. Tomaine and James Toolan.

Joint meeting set for Oct. 7

The Committee to Restore Carbondale City Hall and the Carbondale Historical Society will hold a joint meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 7, in Council Chambers on the second floor of Carbondale City Hall. Members of both organizations are asked to attend this meeting.